

UNISON 2026 AGM NEWSLETTER

DOWN LISBURN BRANCH

Down Lisburn Branch AGM 2026

It's about You, Your Branch, Your Say and Your Vote

Our Branch AGM is the single most important meeting of the year. Every year UNISON requires its branch officers and stewards to stand for re-election. The AGM is your opportunity to have a say in how the branch is run and who will represent you in 2026

It is also a great opportunity to meet with other members and UNISON stewards and to find out how UNISON has been active on your behalf during the year. Some of this year's AGMs will take place online and in the workplace

If you would like to become more active in UNISON: Representing your colleagues or becoming involved in solidarity or welfare work, please contact your branch.



**NO LOW PAY IN NHS PAY
ONLY BETTER PAY WILL DO**

AFC Pay Campaign 2024/25

UNISON has continued to lead the way across health unions in pressing for Agenda for Change pay uplifts in NI. Following the announcement of the Pay Review Body (PRB) recommendations for 2024/25 in July 2024, UNISON pursued their full implementation in NI against the context of a funding crisis across health and social care. In December 2024 we secured a commitment in relation to AFC pay in NI for 2024/25 to maintain pay parity with England, but with payment in two phases, reflecting the financial constraints on the health budget. Following the PRB recommendations in May, the Health Minister stated that he had begun a process to secure the funding required to implement the 3.6% pay uplift by issuing a Ministerial direction that the pay uplift be approved without delay. It was made clear to the Minister that delays in securing funding for a pay uplift are unacceptable to our members, particularly considering that it took until March 2025 for the 2024/25 pay uplift to be put in place.

Following NHS workers in England receiving the recommended 3.6% pay uplift in August, we made clear that the link to pay parity was broken. Through continued negotiation with the Health Minister and Executive to maintain pay parity with England, the Minister confirmed in November that the Department will proceed to put in place the consolidated 3.6% pay uplift and fully backdated to the 1st April 2025. The Department has stated this will be paid in February 2026. However UNISON remains absolutely clear that much more needs done to tackle the problem of low pay. UNISON will hold the Minister, Department and employers to account if they do not move forward to address the serious problems of low pay. UNISON is demanding that progress be made to implement the Real Living Wage and to ensure pay is prioritised in the 2026/2027 budget. The unacceptable cycle of delay seen in putting pay right for the workforce cannot be allowed to continue any longer.

AGM MEETING DATES 2026

Monday 23rd February

Training Room 1 Downshire Hospital 10am - 11am

Tuesday 24th February

**Conference Rm 3 Ground Floor LPCCC Lisburn
11.30am - 12.30pm**

Wednesday 25th February

LARC (Lisburn adult resource centre) 11am - 11.30am

Thursday 26th Downpatrick

**Clinical Skills Room, ground Floor Downe Hospital (Back
of urgent care) 12.30pm - 1.30 pm**

Zoom 2pm & 7pm

If you can't make it to any of our physical meetings please try and join one of our virtual AGM meetings on Thursday 26th Feb. Joining details are below or you can also join by scanning the QR code.

There will be a prize draw for £100 voucher at every meeting!

Meeting ID: 827 7162 0515

Passcode: AGM2026



Not yet a member? JOIN UNISON TODAY!
Call 02890270190 or go to www.unison-ni.org.uk/join



Our UNISON 'Free School Meals for All' campaign is a further important intervention aimed at reducing poverty for our members and their families. The Free School Meals Campaign has continued with the restoration of the Executive and Assembly. We are demanding universal free school meal provision for all children and young people. The campaign objectives are:

- to seek universal, nutritious, free schools meals for all pupils to both reduce poverty and improve public health,
- to safeguard and promote the vital work of our members within schools catering - school meals should be publicly provided,
- to build support for the implementation of a public health model across Government that is aimed at dealing with health and educational inequalities.



Check out the full list of UNISON College courses at this URL:
<https://shorturl.at/KocGt>

Membership services



Members experiencing financial and emotional difficulties can contact UNISON Welfare (There for You), which provides confidential advice and support services for members and their dependants.

<https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/>



THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS

Receive free legal advice and support on non employment matters from Thompsons, our specialist employment solicitors

<https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/legal-services/>



Request free expert financial advice from Quilter Financial Advisers, UNISON's financial services partner

<https://benefits.unison.org.uk/home/money/lighthouse-financial-advice/>



AbbeyAutoline offers discount for UNISON members.

<https://www.abbeyautoline.co.uk/>

BRANCH NEWS

This has been another extremely busy year for Down Lisburn Branch. Our membership continues to grow as does our branch committee. Along with managing the potential for industrial action, the branch has raised the issue for our low paid members for the push to secure the Real Living Wage for All.

We have successfully represented hundreds of our members over the past year in the South Eastern Trust and the other employers our branch covers.

We have supported members and challenged the Trust over management of change proposals. We successfully negotiated the changed job process for band 1 to band 2. Those staff who were eligible have received back pay to 1st Jan 2019.

We had a number of occupations uplifted using our AFC Pay Max Strategy including Support Workers in the residential homes and a number of Admin and Clerical have been upskilled, with ongoing negotiation with the Trust in regard to changes that have impacted this group of staff by the rollout of Encompass.

We worked alongside the Trust to provide health and wellbeing support to members and also numerous anti racism and equality events were held. We celebrated days relevant to our membership such as Pride, International Women's Day, International Nurses Day, Menopause Day, World Mental Health Day and The NHS Birthday.



Branch Contacts

Joint Branch Secretary
Sonia Graham - 07841569873

Joint Branch Secretary
Rosena Robinson - 07562947987

Branch Chair
Sue Roche - 07355091151

Regional Organiser
Joe McCusker - j.mccusker@unison.co.uk

Area Organiser
Claire Bolt - c.bolt@unison.co.uk



For branch news follow our Facebook Page.
Search: Unison Down Lisburn Branch